The Theosophical FORUM

SEPTEMBER 1902

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THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

VOL. 8. SEPTEMBER, 1902 No. 5

* * *

In the ardour of the fight, enveloped and blinded as it were by the smoke of the battle field, we can hardly measure our blows, much less judge of their effects. Perhaps, however, it is the peculiarity of genius to insinuate something more into its work than is imagined. Talent, which knows everything it does and can account for it, can do so only from being incapable of stretching its view beyond the horizon of its time and the actual bounds of its experience. But genius is really the power of anticipating the future; and from age to age its creations do not change on that account, as is sometimes said, in nature or in meaning, but they must be compared with those laws whose fruitful formulae include even unforeseen phenomena.

BRUNETIÉRE.

MAN'S RELATIONS TO ANIMALS.

I.

The first object of the Theosophical Society is to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood. Universal Brotherhood is that state of mind and feeling in which all creatures are regarded as Brothers:—Elder Brothers, Brothers of the same degree, or Younger Brothers. This ideal state is based upon the intuition of the spiritual unity of all beings. All beings are embodiments or expressions of one Universal Soul; all live and move and have their being in that Soul; all are therefore Brothers.

It may assist us in our efforts to attain to the attitude of Universal Brotherhood towards those beings which man considers to be lower in the scale of development than himself, namely, the Animals, if we consider what our Elder Brothers have said as to the relations which exist between these two classes of beings—Man and Animals. And if what they have said approves itself to us as a good working theory, we shall be able to give our intuition of the universality of Brotherhood an intelligent expression which will form a basis for practical action.

The statements made are taken from Madame Blavatsky's book, *The Secret Doctrine,* which contains the information given to her by her Teachers, the aforesaid Elder Brothers. The references given are to the 3rd edition of that book. The comparison between the constitution of Man and Animal is based on the fundamental teachings of the Esoteric Philosophy. The historical fragments are from the record of the Tragedy of Man's evolution preserved by the Teachers—a Tragedy, which, when understood, throws vivid light upon Man's condition to-day and points to the way of liberation from the net in which he now finds himself. The events are spread over an immense period of time—between three and four hundred millions of years. This should be borne in mind. We should also remember that the early races of men and animals were nothing like the men and animals we know to-day. Five great human races have successively lived on this earth; but the first three races differed entirely, both physically and mentally, from the present mankind. It was not until after the middle period

of the Third race that the human mind began to develop, thus making man really "human" as that term is now understood. And, moreover, in the very early times there was so little difference between the "bodies" of men and the "bodies" of the animals, that, were it possible for us to see them now side by side, we should have some difficulty in deciding which was man and which was animal.

We will begin by making a comparison between the animal and human constitutions. Both beings are embodiments of the Universal Soul and there is therefore an element in each which is equally immortal, equally Divine.

The term used for that Divine Essence in all things, that Spirit which moves through the grand cycle of Becoming, the Eternal Root-Nature that underlies all those forms which we variously name:—minerals, vegetation, animals, men, gods, etc., is the Monad, the indestructible Unit. Being eternal it is unchangeable. It is its sixfold vesture that changes and develops and the Monads are classified according to the degree in which their vestures manifest the Monadic Essence.

The six elements, constituents, or principles of the Monadic vesture may be named:—Wisdom, Higher Mind, Lower Mind, or Reason, Desire, Vitality and Form. The perfect being has these principles fully and harmoniously developed. In him the Monadic Essence shines forth in its whole glory. Other beings occupy a place in the scale of evolution according to the number of principles active and latent respectively, and also according to the degree to which each active principle is developed.

If we were to make a classification on the lines indicated we should say that a mineral had one principle developed—Form, the others being latent. A plant has two developed—Form and Vitality. An animal has three—Form, Vitality and Desire. The majority of men have four principles developed—Form, Vitality, Desire and Reason; the Higher Mind and Wisdom are not manifested. The Adept has the Higher Mind active and the Mahatma adds perfect Wisdom to the rest. The Monad, the Divine and innermost Self, is One and the same in all beings. All beings are the One Self and differ only in the degree in which they express that One.

The degree "Animal" denotes a being which has progressed from the degree "Plant" and is moving onward to the degree "Man." The degree "Man" denotes a being who is between the animal and the divine. There are, of course, innumerable sub-degrees, but for the present purpose we only want a general idea of the constitution of beings and we need not therefore deal with these.

Names, it will be seen, are applicable only to the development of the vesture of the Monad; the Monad itself can have no name. The term "Monad" is synonymous with "the One." So when an adjective, such as "human" or "animal," is used to qualify the term, Monad, it must be remembered that there is no difference between the Monads, but that the difference is in the nature of the vestures, which are aggregates of forms, substances, energies, faculties, powers, memories, and so forth. These and the Monad make up the being; and when we purport to classify the Monads we are really classifying their vestures; and we use the phrase "animal Monad" as a briefer and more convenient substitute for the phrase "the Monadic Essence manifested by that aspect of Nature called the Animal Kingdom."

It should now be clear what the difference between an animal and a man is. As the Animal Monad is as immortal as the Human Monad, and as the Animal has the seeds of all the principles (including the human) in itself, the only difference between the two is that in the Animal the specifically human principles are latent and potential and await their development in the future, but in the Man they are active and potent. (II, 206, 266, 279, 552.) In the same way the only difference between an Adept and an ordinary man—who has the seeds of all the higher principles in himself—is that in the man those higher principles are almost entirely latent and await their unfoldment in the future, while in the Adept they are potent and active.

But with regard to the impulse to progress as it manifests in the Animal and the Human Kingdoms respectively, there is a marked difference. In the animals progress is not self-conscious. In them it depends on the general evolutionary impulse—modified very greatly by Man, as we shall presently see. But when the full human stage is once reached, that is when the specifically human

principle is developed, then further progress can only be made by individual self-induced and self-devised efforts. (I, 45). It is as though all beings were borne along by Nature until she had taught them to walk alone and then she leaves them to continue the journey themselves.

The Earth is a great field for the evolution of all kinds of entities, and every being either has already reached, or will some day reach the human stage. All are in fact striving towards the realisation of one great Type or Idea, which the ancients called the "Heavenly Man." (I, 205). All will not attain to our human stage in the present period of evolution, but those that do not will have further and better opportunities in the future cycles.

It is perhaps needless to remark that the Heavenly Man, to which all Nature tends, and for the realisation of which all Nature exists, is the perfect Type that includes all the principles and not merely the living human body. But even that is a very imperfect approximation to the ideal Type of body, and as now perceived by the senses, is really only an insignificant part of the existing human vesture. This extends to subtle grades of substance quite invisible to the physical eye.

Regarded physically a human being is only an animal, a living body, the highest mammal on earth. (I, 254; II, 363). His flesh, nerves. bones, blood, and in fact all the constituents of his physical body are identical in their nature with those of other animals; for which fact in Nature there is a very good reason as we shall see. Physically the Animals and Man are of identically the same race; there is no distinction whatever, save in external modification of form. And if the specifically human principle (which is in no sense a physical principle) had not become potent and active in Man he would to-day be living as the present wild animals live, and with no higher mentality than theirs.

But Man is not only a developed physical being; he is a developed psychic being also; and this makes his consciousness totally different from that of the Animal. It brings into activity faculties and powers that in the Animal are entirely dormant. The Animal is a conscious entity, but Man is a psychically self-conscious being, with the consciousness of an animal also, though the latter is very much modified (not always in the right direction) by the presence

of the psychic nature. In other words, while the animal bodies of both Man and Animal are similar, there is in Man a developed psychic body and therefore a mentality which entirely differs from that of the most highly developed animal on earth.

(*To be Continued.*)

BETWEEN TWO THIEVES.

The great fight in man's destiny is now being waged.

Wise is he who can distinguish the true from the false. Wise is he who can draw a distinction between the Two Thieves. Now is man's opportunity for advancement. He must now surge ahead or fly back to the material world. Now is his time to develop his psychic powers. The two armies are arrayed in dire conflict: The coveted prize is the possession of man's human control. We are on the mountain and it is a question whether we shall say: "My will be done," or "Thy will be done." We are now viewing the promised land and according to the side the "straws will face" the traveler will either place himself in a position to take the bridge over with him, or remain on this side.

All the laborer has to do is to carry the material over the bridge: there is a man over there to do the work. This man alone can look down upon all the planes below, and so if you wish to "lay up treasures," now is the time.

Now is the time for the one thief to pray as the other could not, even if he would.

This is no time to hide behind creeds, doctrines or dogmas. Be yourself and when dissolution sets in *you* will be there.

We must cease to paint psychic pictures if we wish for clear roads upon our return to the physical world. We must take ourselves along for permanent material for our immortal building, else upon our return our path will be strewn with thistles.

Don't look outside for anything. The fight is entirely within. And by our hands we daily crucify our Saviour between two thieves. The one thief may say: "Kneel down and worship me," the other says: "Choose ye this day."

Shall we choose husks or the bread of life?

Only that which was best in our activity and that part of us which we succeeded in making independent of our bodies will be taken over to Paradise. Yet it is the thief who prayed who is to work out the blend with the Father. The inner man must wage the warfare, and make the union with the Father.

The thief at one end of the bridge must pilot his passengers

over the other thief,—the Self will always be at its post to receive your harvest of life.

The bee, in its greed for honey, sometimes gathers more than he can carry and fails to return to its hive. Do your work well and look after the little things, yet select that which will be suitable for your immortal building.

You can only receive benefit in the measure in which you benefit others. Yet if you try to form a nucleus of Universal Brotherhood of man, and you will soon find, that the bridge, the personality is the only means of access to the real Self. The contest upon the mountain was an instance of this struggle between the Two Thieves. "Thy will be done" triumphed, and Jesus—the soul—crossed over and took the bridge with him. The disobedient son united himself to his Father.

The son rolled the stone away from the sepulchre that his burried Christ might arise.

The psychic road, the soul or the bridge was the only means of advance; and victorious is he who can succeed in selecting proper material from the body and carry it over to the architect at the other end of the bridge who will do the work.

It is that thief who will say: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

The breaking of our vows is always the cause of our inability to ford the psychic stream.

Psychic perception. the good thief, draws the mind towards the soul. The other thief draws it towards the animal, or even the blind, inert matter.

Pure love draws us towards the one thief. And another something also called love by some people, draws us towards the other thief. The latter is looking for a reward; the former cares naught for benefits.

The praying thief will resurrect to place his harvest of life upon the altar of the Father.

And our day is the day for all praying thieves and prodigal sons to regain their bond with the Father. Now is humanity's chance to turn around and to say: "Pray for me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."

A BENGAL BAZAAR.

India is a ruin, beautiful only by moonlight; and, like a ruined temple, old India's beauties dwell no longer in perfect design and harmonious unity, but linger in fragments and details—a shattered architrave, a broken capital, "cornice or frieze with bossy sculpture graven."

The dying genius of India soars no more to broad and lofty conceptions; her failing inspiration is dwarfed and stunted to curious and minute beauties, intricate ivories, quaint enamels, and mosaic miniatures. Where ancient India's sculptors hewed the giant bas-reliefs from Elephanta's rocks, and cut the stately curves of Orissa's Tiger-Cave, her children of to-day carve graceful figures and statuettes of stone but a hand's breadth high; and where the old artist drew Ellora's thousand friezes, the modern intricately adorns an inlaid cup, or delicately chisels a diminutive vase.

In the shadow of some ancient pile of sculptured stones, are huddled together the huts of the modern Indian craftsmen, who busy themselves to reproduce on some ivory miniature, or marble toy, the grand curves and tracery of the mighty ruin above their heads. They initiate nothing, they invent nothing; their traditions and models are millenniums old. There, in the lucent air, under their withered palm-leaf screens, they work away noisily, merrily, with the garrulity of a nation's extreme old age.

Beneath a pale, hot sky that glistens fiercely round the flaming sun, we made our way among the huts, under the stiff plumes of the cocoa-nut palms, along the red, dusty path that led to a bazaar, clustered round the ruins of an old Bengal Raja's palace. The distant rattle of a wandering juggler's drum reached us; the clang of an anvil; the loud croak of a purple crow that looked askance at us from the roof-pole of a doorless hut. Faint wreaths of pungent blue smoke tinged the air, mingling with the damp woody odour of bamboos.

A crowd of chattering naked dusty children escorted us, in noisy, delightful excitement, laughing and shouting to us, "Mem-Sahib, baksheesh! Ekti paisa do, Sahib! Mem-Sahib, paisa do!" and tripping and tumbling against each other in their eagerness;

and one little toddler, a plump coffee-coloured boy, decorated with a belt of old coins and keys, constituted himself our bodyguard, and did us signal service by dislodging the gaunt, ugly pariah dogs that howled and snarled at us, but slunk away rebuked before the little fellow's fat brown fist, or pink, spurning heel, undipped in their dusky Styx. At last, turning a corner under a quaint old arch, or watch-tower, of crumbling dull red brick, we found ourselves in the sun-steeped bazaar, with long rows of sheds of Hindu artisan and Mussulman merchant ranged on each side of the narrow street, with its heaps of red dust, broken straw, sleeping pariah dogs, and brown, naked children; the whole gay with a bright-clad, laughing throng, that our appearance only stimulated to fresh noise.

The burning air penetrated the whole picture, and gave its colours a brilliancy only seen in eastern lands. As we entered the bazaar, an old village woman, in faded grey muslin *sari,* squatting on a much worn mat, began screaming to us the virtues of her wares, heaps of green plantains, scarlet chillies, white garlic, blue brinjals, and brown and yellow nameless fruit, ranged round her in a crescent on the mat. At her right hand, and well within sight and grasp, a little pile of dirty coppers, and brown-streaked cowrie shells, the currency of her village wares.

We appeased her by a purchase and calmed the vehemence that lighted up her thousand wrinkles, receiving some carefully counted cowries as our change.

While our bargaining with the old fruit-seller went on, a few craftsmen and shopkeepers left their sheds, and, gathering round us, volunteered advice and criticism, opening up wordy discussions on their own and their neighbours' wares. "Come, Mem-Sahib! come to my shop!" cried one, a keen wiry fellow. with bright, restless eyes, the end of his white muslin scarf flung jauntily over his brown right shoulder;—"Come to my shop and see the new stone platters and dishes I have brought from Patna! very nice, *bahut achcha!* Mem-Sahib!" This last condescendingly in Hindustani, the only native language ladies are supposed to understand. "No, Sahib!" interposed a gaunt, hawk-like, one-eyed man; lean, and

with sunken chest. "Come first and see my beautiful Daccai muslins!"

"Your Daccai muslins, indeed!" laughed a third; "why, you weave them here in a back lane and then put Daccai labels on them!" At this the crowd laughed, and the hawk-like man retired discomfited.

"No, Mem-Sahib!" cried another, a silversmith, redolent of his charcoal forge; "come and see my bangles and female ornaments, all made of Company rupees!"

"Come first and see my lamps and Ingreji (English) goods, Sahib! Mem-Sahib says she wants to buy some silver ornaments!" cried the silversmith. "No! Mem-Sahib says she wants to see my Kashmir cloths," cried a big, Jewish-featured Kabuli merchant, far paler than the undergown Bengalis round him. And so on till we were rescued from this babel-din by the arrival of a white-robed, spectacled village schoolmaster, who at once took us under his protection in virtue of having once been a Government clerk; and whose grey hair and semi-official position, supported by an unlimited assumption of dignity, gave him a position of authority amongst the crowd.

He assured us, with a magnificent wave of the hand, that the cloth merchants were low fellows, and that the only shop really worthy of our visit in the bazaar, was the stone-carver's, an honest fellow, who, by the way, happened to be his brother-in-law. So we were led to the stone-carver's shed by the sympathetic crowd of shopkeepers, with a penumbra of chattering children, the little schoolmaster being in command. The shopkeepers and artisans deserted their wares to join our crowd, in complete mutual confidence, and with a grand oriental politeness that seemed to say that all their own business, however important, must be laid aside while they minded ours.

When we arrived, the sole occupant of the stone-carver's shed was a wrinkled, gray-haired woman, with that air of arid antiquity, and shrewish world-weariness that overtakes all low-caste Indian women in early middle age, but withal a cheerful relic, seated on a clean grass mat, and surrounded by tiers of saucers, rice-dishes, and broad platters of grey Patna soapstone, so soft that, when fresh

quarried, you can turn it on a lathe, or carve it with a penknife.

Here a noisy diversion was created by the arrival of another old woman, more arid than the first, screaming out imprecations, gesticulating wildly, and evidently bent on doing a mischief on her of the stone platters. "Come, Sahib! listen, Mem-Sahib!" she vehemently cried. "Don't look at that vile Padma Bibi's stone platters! Badma Bibi is a base fraud, and may all her dirty platters tumble down and smash her head!" (great applause from the infantile penumbra);—"Come, Mem-Sahib! come quick, and see my stone platters! the best in the bazaar! come quick, before it is too late!"—(this with a despairing glance over her shoulder).

We were at a loss for the key to this mystery, but our crowd of sympathetic counsellors seemed fully to understand and enter into the dispute. The little old schoolmaster took up the cudgels for Padma Bibi, and bore down on the intruder with his umbrella —the Bengali's natural weapon of defence—, exclaiming:

"Get away, you low-caste woman! Don't you be trying to interlope into our bargain with your dirty dishes, you! Here comes my brother-in-law! He knows more about Patna stone than anyone in this bazaar!"

The "low-caste" woman, in reply, poured out a torrent of objurgations on the heads of Padma Bibi, the schoolmaster, his brother-in-law, their man-servant and their maid-servant, and then retreated to her own shop discomfited, and growling at the loss of a bargain. Arrived there, she cooled her rancour, and restored her equanimity by puffing vigorously at a dirty hookah, firing from between her lips wreaths of the vilest smelling tobacco smoke in the world, as if every puff were a shot levelled at the heart of the reprobate schoolmaster, or that infamous rival in platters, his fraudulent brother-in-law.

When the brother-in-law arrived, the objurgatory old lady's eagerness to get possession of us, and her tempestuous uneasiness at his rivalry were justified, for he turned out to be a real connoisseur of stone-carving, and more than deserving of the little schoolmaster's interested encomiums. After introducing himself as the owner of the shop, and the brother-in-law of the little schoolmaster—once a Government clerk and thereby a distant but determined relation of the British Indian Government in general, and

of ourselves in particular, the new arrival began to take down from dusty shelves, little stone figures of Hindu gods, saints, and Yogis, curiously carved, elephant-headed Ganeshas, the milkmaid Radha, her beloved Kisto "Krishna," seated in contemplation in the Lotus-posture, Mahadebs, Naradas, and a dozen more.

From a dark nook among the rafters he brought out a smoke-stained group of half-a-dozen Rishis, joined elbow to elbow, curiously cut in grey stone, and strongly reminding us of some carved oak panel of mediæval saints or apostles. From yet another corner he unearthed some beautifully carved and polished elephants, a few of them exquisitely finished; all diminutive. One little elephant in particular, that held a twisting lotus-stem in his trunk, was altogether admirable as a work of art; the big bosses on his forehead, the skin folds on his flank, the stiffly bent knee, the restless flick of the tail, that almost seemed to move, went as far as the sculptor's art can go.

We could well believe the brother-in-law's assurance that the little elephant was a hundred years old, for the once grey stone had turned to glossy black with age. But the sculptor's ideal must have been millenniums old; for never in India now do you see such sleek, well-favoured pachyderms; the goodly curves of Leviathan have shrunk and shrivelled away with the withering glory of his mother India.

As the stone-carver laid down together on the mat a four-handed, tusked and trunked Ganesha, and this beautifully moulded little elephant, one could not but fall a moralising on the vast gulf that separates the symbolic sculpture of the high-caste Brahmans from the simple, perfect naturalism of some low-caste artist, such as he who carved this little elephant.

What perverse inspiration was it, what malign whisper of the powers that rule unbeauty, that led the metaphysical Brahmans to embody their transcendental imaginings in cosmology in solid marble and lasting stone? These sculptured nine-fold Ravanas, these seven-headed Serpents, and much-armed Kalis, expressed in stone, are as dissonant and discordant as a chapter on quarternions set to the music of Apollo's lute.

But for this metaphysical cloud to misguide the sculptor's chisels, we might have had an Indian school of sculpture, beautiful

and natural, as this carved elephant showed, even if rather stiff and solemn than graceful, rather Egyptian than Greek. Even now these sculptured Rishis possess in many things the rudiments, or even considerably developed characteristics, of a true Indian school of sculpture. They embody, with a considerable fidelity, a high type of physical development; the craftsmen have even been able to give them a certain moral dignity and thought; and in their repose and quiescence they strongly remind us of the sculptured dynasties of the Nile.

These Egyptian analogies are frequent enough in Indian sculpture; many of the faces in the bas-reliefs of Elephanta are pure Egyptian in type; and I remember once seeing a native clay-modeller, who had never left his village in a remote corner of Bengal, moulding a perfect Sphinx head, Egyptian head-dress and all, under the impression that he was making an idol of the Indian Durga.

Our reflections on the lost school of Indian sculpture were cut short by our guide, the grey-haired pedagogue, who pressed us to conclude our bargain with the brother-in-law, and, at once relieving us of our purchases, entrusted them to the nearest small boy, with instructions to carry them to our tents. Gopal, or Kartik, or whatever his name may have been, was at first reluctant to leave the fascinating bazaar, but at last consented on the understanding that baksheesh was in the wind.

When he disappeared at a run with our treasures, "Mem-Sahib," who had not understood the arrangement, was aghast at what seemed to be the loss of her spoils; but at last the little pedagogue persuaded her that he was a very good little boy, and would take them quite safe. While "Mem-Sahib" was still unpacified, the small boy appeared breathless and radiant for his baksheesh, averring his intention to spend it on *Sandesh*, to us, unattractive compound of molasses, rice, and ghee. Then Gopal faded into the penumbra, and we saw him no more. In the evening, however, "Mem-Sahib" found her treasures all safe, and duly delivered; Gopal was vindicated.

From the stone-carver's shed we turned, still under the guidance of our friendly pedagogue, to a hardware merchant's store,

full of cheap lamps and coloured glasses, stoneware, cups and bowls, glass beads and steel watch-chains, for the most part made in Germany or Belgium.

I am sorry to say that our gray-haired, spectacled guide, who was old enough to have known better, and the whole bazaar after him, expressed the warmest admiration for these worthless examples of showy vulgarity, devoid of every artistic or imaginative merit, and I believe nothing but their respect for our superior purchasing power prevented them, in the character of future possible sellers, from expressing openly their contempt at our strong preference for native over foreign wares. The harm that these wretched imported vulgarities do to Indian taste and Indian arts is very great, for the very reason that these arts are no longer creative, but traditional and imitative, and have no inherent vital force of their own to counteract foreign influences and the attraction of showy novelty.

But the harm that globe-trotting buyers do is far greater. To mention a few cases out of many, their uncultivated taste, or rather total absence of any taste whatsoever, has altered, debased, and vulgarised the style of Madras gold thread work, Delhi silk embroidery, Benares brasses, and Murshidabad ivory; so that at present there are in the market two widely different styles of each of these arts, the one old, and rapidly going out of fashion, representing the real traditional artistic expression of the old Indian nations; the other new, and rapidly growing in favour, an exotic medley of neo-romantic æstheticism with old Aryan designs, a monstrous mixture of modern Bond Street and ancient Benares. It was a relief to leave these Belgian novelties, all unpurchased, in spite of our guide's insistent protestations, and turn to the shed of a clay modeller, whose tastes and methods were still incorrupt.

The modeller, a grizzled little man, with white turban over his smiling brown face, was a genuine enthusiast for his work, and a true artist in his own way. Not content with splendidly modelling little figures of Brahmans, merchants, sepoys, coolies, cultivators, and a dozen others, he even went the length of colouring each with the exact shade of brown, chocolate, or café-au-lait, that race, caste, or occupation had given to each of his subjects. More

than this, he even adorned with eyebrows, eye-lashes, beards shaven and unshaven, flowing locks, or single fore-lock, the faces of his subjects, according to their caste, age, custom, or personal whim; and he had given so much life and character to his studies that an ethnologist might have learned a great deal from his little figures, about the tribes and races of Lower Bengal.

Here, for instance, was a Brahman, pale, with large forehead, finely formed nose, sunken chest and narrow shoulders; a Mussulman, evidently from the North-west, darker than the Brahman, with the turban and slippers of Delhi, and the disdainful air of a conquering nation.

Beside them, a sweeper, a low-caste Hindu, far darker than the others, shaven, but with grizzled chin, three days unshaved; turbaned, but without the jaunty air of the Delhi Mussulman, and carrying under one arm the bundle of twigs that marked the occupation of his caste; then a Bengali policeman, in the queer blue uniform and red turban that the Bengal Government prescribes, his face so finely finished that anyone familiar with Bengal could recognise him for a convert to Islam, but of Bengali blood, and not a follower of the conquering Mughals; beside the policeman, a dhobi —an Indian washerman—, a bundle of clean clothes on his back, with dishevelled turban, light flowered muslin vest, and with that look of pensive, meek humility that Bengali *dhobis* have beyond the rest of the human race. Amusing and interesting to us were a series of Indian servants in the garb and habit that Anglo-Indian custom imposes on its domestics.

The whole series of them were there, the butler, *Khansamah*, with bland, suave visage, every feature breathing consciousness of his importance, and a subdued melancholy in his eyes, telling that he might, an if he would, disclose strange things about his occidental masters; then the *bearer*, so called, perhaps, because he has to bear much besides the clothes and boots that are the rightful objects of his attention; then the *Khidmatgar*, the cook, the deputy cook, the syces, and the whole throng of them that live so well and work so badly.

It seemed to us that the modeller turned from these with regret, and even with some slight disdain, to the other branch of his trade, the making, moulding and modelling of sundry idols,

gods, and goddesses, and dolls, the former for the pious at festival times, the latter for the little dusky wights of our penumbra. There were Naradas, Durgas, Kalis, Rishis, Krishnas, Hanumans, and so on, carelessly moulded and bedaubed with red and yellow and blue, their turbans and robes included in the clay, and not delicately fashioned of fine muslin, like the scarfs and head-gear of the modelled natives.

The dolls were strange beyond imagining; mere red columns of clay, with nobs for arms, ears and noses, and strange conical headdress of clay, painted shiny black. These grotesques at first gave me a poor opinion of native infant intelligence, that would allow itself to be put off with suchan apology for a plaything; but when "Mem-Sahib" pointed out that it was greatly to the honour of their imagination that the little Bengalis could build on such a slender basis an imagined thing of beauty and a likeness of the human race.

We bade farewell reluctantly to the gay little modeller, not unfurnished, however, with specimens of his skill.

Next door to the clay-modeller, if one may say so of open sheds that had no door, a withered little man—for almost all Bengali artisans are small of stature—plied one of the strangest arts that even that wild, out of the way bazaar could boast of. He was a maker of the shell bracelets used in sets of four in the Hindu ceremony of betrothal; he cut them delicately with a fine steel saw from the great white conch or *shankh* shells of the Indian ocean. Then, carefully polishing them, a line or two of vermillion, with delicate pencilling in yellow, a hole pierced to bind the four together, and the shell bracelets were ready to manacle the dusky little Durgis and Padmas securely for this world and the next. The pencillings on these shell bracelets are very curious; they seem, with the runic cross marks on the edge, to bear some mystic meaning, the tale of some old talisman, once religiously believed in and dreaded, but now long since forgotten. The tinkle tinkle of the four fold bracelets of shell on the little brown arms is very pretty and musical. After the shell-cutter, our guide took us, still followed by the interested, noisy crowd, with its fringe of merry children, to the workshop of a *Kanchari,* or worker in white brass.

With evident pride in his occupation, he told us that his family had for generations belonged to the brass-working guild of Khagra, a suburb of Berhampore, where they make the finest white brass work in Bengal, and, indeed, as our *Kanchari* told us, in the whole universe. The mainstay of his trade was the manufacture of those brass bowls and platters, goblets and cups which, for food and for devotion, have filledan all-important part in Hindu households since the days of the old law-giver Manu. Without them, no Hindu could duly perform his daily ablutions and prayers, or eat the *chaul* and *dal* that his caste rules prescribe. Without them his mate and helpmeet would be deprived of the most important of her daily tasks—the burnishing and polishing of these cups and platters by the riverside in the morning, before the sun has heated to burning the yellow sand that borders on the stream.

A charming picture they make every morning, on some stream of the holy Ganges, these groups of Hindu women, in their bright muslin *saris,* busily burnishing the shining brass, by the edge of the blue, calm water, mirroring the temples and palms on its bank; and the high-prowed native craft that float lazily down with the languid stream; when the clang of the oar in the row-lock, and the blade's dull splash in the water echo gong-like over the quiet stream, and, ever and anon, some snatch of a boatman's song, weird, musical, unearthly, completes the magic of the picture.

How they make this white brass is uncertain, though tradition says it contains some silver, like the Moscow bell-metal of old; the red ingots of copper are brought in bullock-carts from the boats that lie by the wharves of the river-ports on the Ganges and its streams.

Besides these main subjects of his trade, the *Kanchari* made and painted little brass spice boxes, cups and trays, whose uses were mostly unintelligible to us; and, yet another branch of his art, little brazen gods and goddesses and heroes repeated again the types we had already seen in stone and clay. While the brass-worker and the little schoolmaster were initiating me into the kindred and relationship of all these Ganeshas, and Durgas, and Mahadebs, I noticed that Mem-Sahib, weary of mythology, had disappeared. For a minute or two there was no clue to her whereabouts,

but a laughing, noisy crowd round the *dokan* of the Kashmiri cloth-merchant, who had fallen under the little pedagogue's displeasure when we first entered the bazaar.

Leaving the brazier's shop, and joining the crowd at the Kashmiri's door, I saw Mem-Sahib, in the dark recesses of the shop, gravely discussing with the tall merchant the merits of certain Persian printed cloths which, it seems, she had unearthed from under his bales of Indian muslins.

The objects of discussion lay unfolded on a clean grass mat on the floor; the Kashmiri on one side gravely held up both hands, with fingers spread, to signify the rupees; Mem-Sahib, on the other, with equal gravity held up three fingers to indicate her valuation of the Persian prints. The Kashmiri shrugged his shoulders, raised his eye-brows, and evinced other oriental signs of surprise at the "ridiculous" offer made to him for his wares. "Don't pay the rupees, Mem-Sahib! Very much dear!" whispered the little schoolmaster mindful of his former animosity, and struggling with a very evident fear of the tall broad-shouldered native of Kashmir. "Kashmiri people very thieving people, Mem-Sahib! don't buy that dirty old Parsi (Persian) cloth! Look! buy one of these nice Bilaté (European) shawls. See, I have got one of them myself—" proudly showing a cheap German textile, then the fashion in the bazaars; "and all the Bengali gentlemen wear them now."

Beside these German shawls were several rolls of green and scarlet baize, the former evidently destined originally to furnish billiard-tables; it had, however, caught the popular taste, and almost threatened to oust German shawls in the most fashionable circles of Bengali gentlemen. Since then I believe, green and scarlet baizes have become more and more "distinguished" for ordinary bazaar and collegiate wear.

Mem-Sahib, however, resisted the little pedagogue's blandishments, and hardened her heart to the enticements of Hamburg and Elbrfeld novelties, and at last, after ten minutes hard bargaining, managed to get the pair of Persian cloths for five rupees, evidently to the discomfiture of the Kashmiri, who, however, did not like to hold out, in view of possible further purchases. Evidently the

Kashmiri was unpopular in the bazaar, for the crowd vented its admiration of Mem-Sahib's victory and his defeat as clamorously as it dared, in view of the strong arm of the, to them, gigantic north-country man.

TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS

IN THE SPIRITUAL AND MATERIAL SENSE

Greeting!

"THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM" recently published a Notice, addressed to the authors of many unwritten articles, among its readers, praying them to get the said articles written down and sent to us. This request brought such good results, in the form of certain excellent contributions by quite new writers, that we are impelled to repeat our invitation. Good friends, no longer hide your talents in the napkin of the unmanifested, but precipitate them on paper, and give them to waiting humanity, through our pages. Be encouraged to tread in the path of the Sages who have gone before you! Let your inward revelations take body in the written word! Modesty is a beautiful virtue; so also is courage. Show that you are wise, by letting this word suffice.

Now to address our contributors in the material sense: "THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM" with every year grows firmer on its foundation, more able to stand alone. Its independent life grows and developes. A new milestone in its journey is passed, with this number. From henceforth, all subscriptions and donations are to be sent *to the Editor direct,* and no longer to four or five different addresses, in different cities. We hope soon to bring all subscriptions up to date, and, where subscribers have sent their contributions in the middle of a volume, we hope to send them notices asking for a supplementary subscription to carry their subscription forward to the beginning of a new volume. There are a good many among our readers whose subscriptions, like the articles alluded to above, still dwell in the unmanifested; these we shall ask to precipitate, to materialise. To all and sundry, we make the request that contributions, subscriptions, communications and sendings of whatever nature may in future be addressed to us direct; money being remitted by postal orders, payable to

The Editor,

THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM,

Flushing, N. Y.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

Founded by H. P. BLAVATSKY at New York in 1875.

The Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics.*

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *Path* to tread in this."

There are no dues.

The expenses of the Theosophical Society in America are met by voluntary contributions, which should be sent to the Treasurer T. S. A., Box 1584, New York, N. Y.

Applications for membership should be addressed to the Secretary T. S. A., P. O. Box 1584, New York.